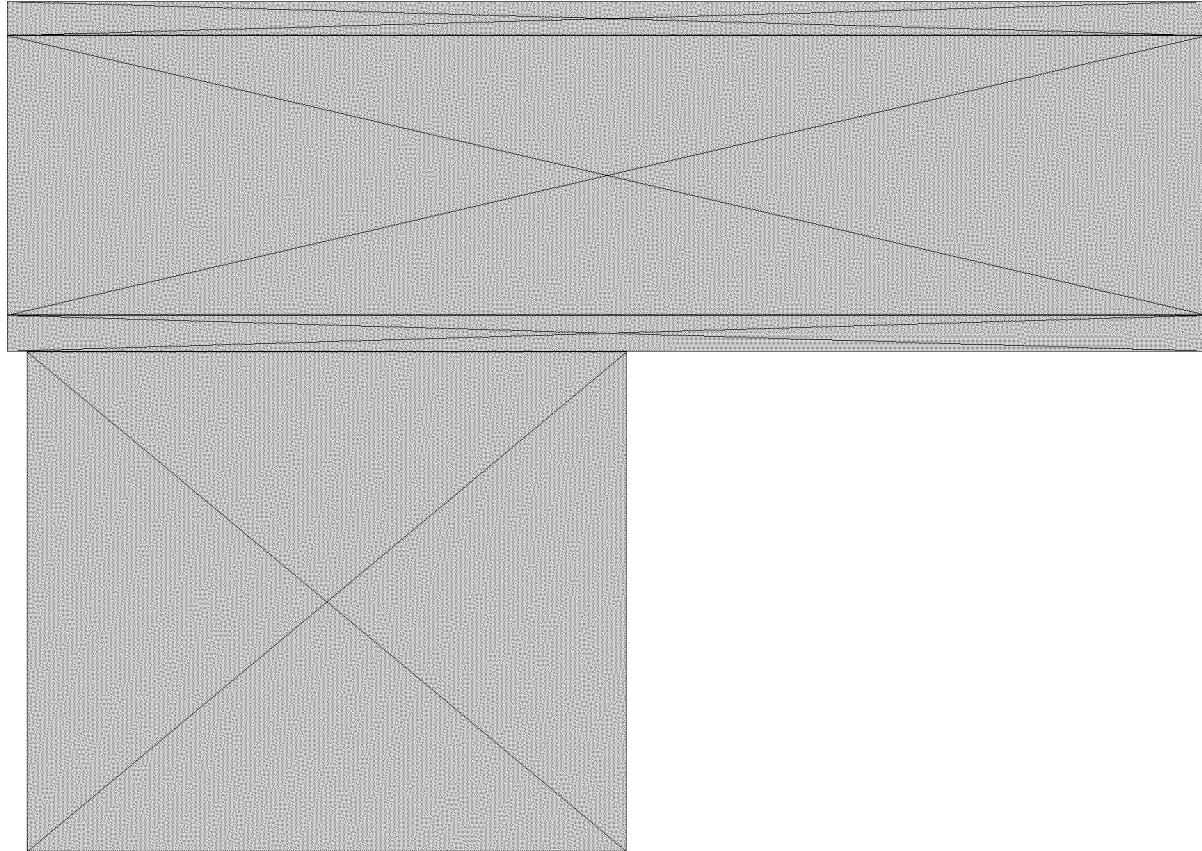


**To:** Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]  
**From:** EnergyGuardian  
**Sent:** Tue 9/15/2015 9:47:28 PM  
**Subject:** White House announces opposition to Barton oil export bill

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Energy and environment headlines for the afternoon of Tuesday, September 15, 2015



## White House announces opposition to Barton oil export bill

By Kevin Rogers

The White House and Republican lawmakers appeared to be on a collision course over crude exports Tuesday, as the administration announced its opposition to a bill to lift the U.S. export ban even as House leaders said they would fast-track the measure.

"This is a policy decision that is made over at the Commerce Department, and for that reason, we wouldn't support legislation like the one that's been put forward by Republicans."

Press Secretary Josh Earnest said at a briefing.

Majority Leader Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said in Houston that the House would move quickly to vote on the bill from Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, which would lift the ban outright and prohibit any new executive branch restrictions on crude exports.

"If there was ever a time to lift the oil export ban, it's now," McCarthy said in the prepared text of a speech before the Greater Houston Partnership. "Now, as President Obama prepares to lift sanctions on Iran, including Iranian oil, it is unfathomable to think American crude wouldn't have the same opportunity on the global market."

Earnest shot back that McCarthy's pronouncement is proof that Republicans are in the pocket of oil companies.

"This policy announcement is being made by Leader McCarthy in front of an organization in Houston that is largely funded by four or five of the biggest oil companies in the United States," he said. "So it is pretty clear, once again, where Republicans in Congress and their political benefactors stand when it comes to their energy policy priorities."

The House Energy and Commerce Committee plans to mark up the bill starting Wednesday. Barton said last week that he hoped it would win broad support in the House and be signed into law before Christmas.

Chairman Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., said the White House opposition to the bill ran against numerous studies touting the economic benefits of ending the ban.

"I am disappointed the WH would voice opposition to lifting the crude oil ban when a good number of prominent studies have indicated that the price at the American pump would actually go down by lifting the ban. Many are asking why the Iranians are now allowed to export crude and only the Americans are denied," he said in a comment relayed via email.

Earlier in the day, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., who has introduced a bill in the Senate to lift the ban, said she had been having productive talks with the administration on crude exports. She voiced hope that legislation on the issue could be signed into law if the right policy riders are added.

"I have had a lot of conversations, including conversations with the president himself about this, and I think every time we have those conversations we feel we're building a little more understanding," she said at a National Journal event. "I think at the end of the day, the policy balance is going to be how we look at renewables."

Specifically, Heitkamp said the bill could gain a "good coalition" in the Senate if it is expanded to include provisions to extend renewable energy tax credits.

"I think this is an opportunity to make an argument about production tax credits and investment tax credits in the context of giving certainty across the board to the energy

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industry, and truly supporting an all-of-the-above policy,” she said.

Sen. Ed Markey, D-Mass., speaking at the same event, dismissed the prospect of such a compromise, arguing that the oil lobby and Republicans would stand in the way of any policy to boost renewables.

“That offer is not going to be put on the table,” said Markey, one of the leading critics of efforts to lift the ban. “The reason it’s teased out is that they want to figure out how they can put this thing together with the minimum number of Democratic votes in order to pass it.”

Sens. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Angus King, I-Maine, both members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, indicated in July that they could support lifting the export ban if it were coupled with pro-renewable policies.

Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., also speaking at the National Journal event Tuesday, agreed with Markey that renewable credits would be a hard sell for Republicans. He argued the move to lift the export ban would be better hitched to something with a strong likelihood of passing, such as the Senate bill to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act.

The White House opposition to Barton’s legislation drew praise from a group of refiners.

“We are glad that the White House has stated their opposition to the Barton bill,” Jay Hauck, executive director of Consumers and Refiners United for Domestic Energy, said in an email. “We have maintained all along that this is a risky policy change. The losers will be American consumers, businesses, and national security.”

The American Petroleum Institute, meanwhile, urged the administration to reconsider its position.

“The administration has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by opening the door to U.S. exports, creating new jobs, helping American families, and strengthening America’s position as an energy superpower,” President and CEO Jack Gerard said in a statement. “Lawmakers are right to ask why U.S. producers shouldn’t have the same access to global markets that the administration would give Iran.”

## Quick Links

**[Interior Dept.: High-risk oil, gas wells checks lack funding](#)**

**[California district agrees to pay \\$3.5B to clean up water](#)**

**[Record Southern California rain swamps roads, knocks out power](#)**

**[Feds: Arctic sea ice levels shrink to 4th lowest level](#)**

**Agency nixes proposed rafts where walrus can rest off Alaska**

**Toyota launches hydrogen-fueled sedan**

**SAS scraps Norway-Texas 'oil route' flights as business dips**

**Wildfire funding needs to change, Obama officials tell Congress**

**Ditching federal drilling leases unreasonable, says Jewell**

**More output decline in shale plays this month, according to EIA**

**Oil gains on EIA report of output drop**

**Arctic lease extensions for Shell still uncertain**

**Jobs going overseas after loss of Ex-Im financing, GE says**

**SD should expand wind power, governor says at groundbreaking**

**Three-month extension for customer interest in Kinder Morgan pipeline project**

**DOE trying to spread its research money effectively**

**Upcoming Events**

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## **Interior Dept.: High-risk oil, gas wells checks lack funding**

**By Matthew Daly**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Bureau of Land Management lacks sufficient resources to inspect high-risk oil and gas wells on federal land as a drilling boom continues in Wyoming, Colorado and other states, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said Tuesday.

The Obama administration has proposed a fee on oil and gas drillers that would allow the land management agency to hire more than 60 inspectors, but the proposal has not gained traction in Congress.

The land bureau faces a "major backlog of inspections" as it tries to keep pace with a drilling boom that has sharply increased U.S. oil and gas production in recent years, Jewell said.

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"We do not have the resources necessary to do the job," Jewell said at a breakfast sponsored by the Christian Science Monitor. The inspectors are needed to protect the environment and prevent potential health hazards caused by leaking wells, she said.

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## **California district agrees to pay \$3.5B to clean up water**

**By Scott Smith**

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — The nation's largest irrigation district agreed to spend \$3.5 billion to clean up contaminated water in California's fertile Central Valley, in a tentative deal announced Tuesday that will settle a decades-old dispute with the federal government.

Westlands Water District will clean up water tainted by salt that has accumulated in soil from years of irrigation, general manager Thomas Birmingham said. Federal officials have failed for more than half a century to do the work that the district will undertake, he said.

But critics say the district and the U.S. Department of Interior secretly forged the agreement that wipes away large amounts of the district's debt and potentially gives it greater access to the state's scarce water supplies amid a record drought.

Responding to critics, Birmingham said that negotiations were done in private, but were not secret.

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## **Record Southern California rain swamps roads, knocks out power**

**By Christopher Weber**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A record-breaking storm slammed parched Southern California on Tuesday, cutting off power to thousands, jamming traffic during the morning commute and stranding some people in surging waterways.

Downtown Los Angeles saw a staggering 2.38 inches, breaking a record for rainfall for the date and marking the second-wettest 24-hour period on record for September, National Weather Service meteorologist Robbie Munroe said.

Swift-water rescue crews plucked three people and a dog from tree branches as the Los

Angeles River quickly swelled from its usual trickle to a raging torrent.

"Me and my dog, we got caught by the rising waters. We had to climb up a tree to wait it out," said David Quinones, a homeless man who lives in an encampment along the riverbank just north of downtown. "We were just kind of clinging on for dear life."

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## **Feds: Arctic sea ice levels shrink to 4th lowest level**

**By Seth Borenstein**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Summer Arctic sea ice shrank to its fourth lowest level on record this month, dispelling faint hopes of a recovery, federal scientists said.

The National Snow and Ice Data Center announced Tuesday that the Arctic hit its summer minimum last week with 1.7 million square miles of sea ice, down 240,000 square miles from 2014. That's a difference the size of California, New York and Maryland combined.

"The ice is decreasing over time, which you would expect because the Arctic is warming," data center scientist Julianne Stroeve said.

Summer minimum sea ice has shrunk since satellites started measuring in 1979. It reached a peak of 2.91 million square miles in 1980 and hit an all-time low of 1.3 million square miles in 2012. It went back up to 1.95 in 2013 and hovered near there in 2014.

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## **Agency nixes proposed rafts where walrus can rest off Alaska**

**By Dan Joling**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has declined for now to create artificial floating platforms for Pacific walrus that come ashore in Alaska because they lack summer sea ice.

The agency's decision came in response to a suggestion by a wildlife advocacy group to place experimental rafts over a prime Chukchi Sea feeding area 100 miles off Alaska's coast, Geoffrey Haskett, Alaska regional director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said in a letter Monday.

"We do not think such a measure is needed at this time," Haskett said in the letter to Rick Steiner of Oasis Earth.

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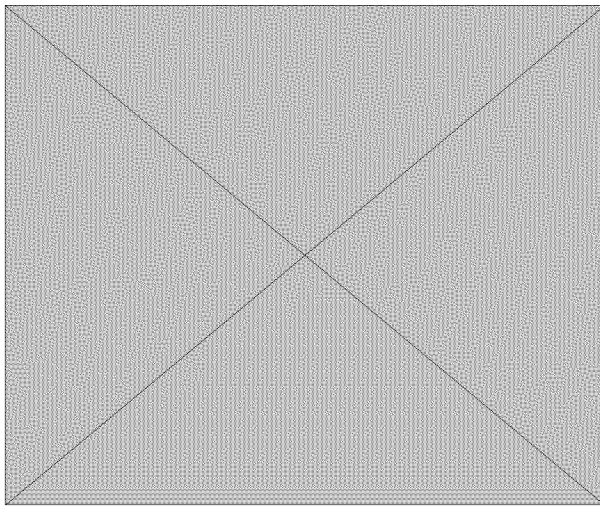
An estimated 35,000 Pacific walrus were photographed Sept. 2 near Point Lay in what has become an annual September phenomenon tied to shrinking sea ice attributed to climate warming.

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## **A message from the American Petroleum Institute**

**America is now the world's #1 natural gas producer and will soon be #1 in oil. Now more than ever, abundant energy means abundant prosperity, opportunity and security for all Americans.**

[Learn more at EnergyTomorrow.org](http://EnergyTomorrow.org)



## **Toyota launches hydrogen-fueled sedan**

**By Colleen Barry**

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Toyota is taking the next step in its quest for carbon-free travel with the launch of the Mirai hydrogen-fueled sedan.

The Japanese brand that pioneered the hybrid gas-electric powertrain sees hydrogen cars as the end-game, following plug-in hybrids and full-electric vehicles.

The region's new CEO, Johan van Zyl, told reporters on the sidelines of the Frankfurt auto show on Monday that "It's not a question of if, it's a question of when," hydrogen technology will go mainstream.

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Toyota Europe expects sales of between 50 and 100 Mirai's this year and next, with 47 ordered to date. It is being sold only in Britain, Germany, Denmark and Belgium, where Toyota is working on getting in hydrogen pumping stations with local partners.

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## **SAS scraps Norway-Texas 'oil route' flights as business dips**

**By The Associated Press**

STAVANGER, Norway (AP) — Scandinavian Airlines says it will stop flying between the Norwegian city of Stavanger and Houston, Texas, because of "a severe decrease" in demand following a downturn in the oil industry.

SAS Group spokesman Eivind Roald says there were "no sound commercial grounds for continuing this niche route."

Roald said Tuesday the group "had to accept that the downturn in the industry unfortunately is also impacting us." The last flight on what Roald called the "oil line" will depart Oct. 23 from Stavanger and return the following day.

He added the aircraft would be switched to the Copenhagen-New York route, which has more potential.

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## **Week in Review – House Panel Oks Lifting Oil Export Ban**

Gasoline Consumption Measure Fails in California.

[Click here to read the brief](#)

## **Wildfire funding needs to change, Obama officials tell Congress**

The “disastrous” wildfire season, which has seen more than 8.5 million acres burned, makes it more critical than ever for Congress to change the way firefighting is budgeted, top Obama administration officials said in a letter to ranking Energy and Natural Resources Committee member Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., The Hill reports.



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### **Ditching federal drilling leases unreasonable, says Jewell**

The U.S. is still dependent on fossil fuels, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said Tuesday at a breakfast hosted by the Christian Science Monitor, as she deflected calls from environmental groups to end leasing of federal lands and the outer continental shelf, The Hill reports.

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### **More output decline in shale plays this month, according to EIA**

The Permian Basin remains the only major U.S. shale play where output is increasing, the Energy Information Administration said Tuesday, predicting a decline in the Eagle Ford, Bakken, Utica and Niobrara in September, FuelFix reports.

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### **Oil gains on EIA report of output drop**

Data from the Energy Information Administration projecting a fall in output at major U.S. shale plays helped give oil prices a boost Tuesday. Light, sweet crude for October delivery rose 59 cents to settle at \$44.59 a barrel on the Nymex, while in London, Brent increased 26 cents to \$46.63, The Wall Street Journal reports.

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### **Arctic lease extensions for Shell still uncertain**

There's been little indication thus far on how the Interior Department will rule on last year's request from Royal Dutch Shell to extend its Arctic drilling leases in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, E&E reports.

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### **Jobs going overseas after loss of Ex-Im financing, GE says**

The loss of financing from the Export-Import Bank—which Congress has refused to reauthorize—is the reason why General Electric will move as many as 500 turbine manufacturing jobs to Europe, Reuters reports.

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### **SD should expand wind power, governor says at groundbreaking**

At Monday's groundbreaking ceremony for a \$225 million wind energy transmission line, Gov. Dennis Daugaard, R-S.D., said energy companies, landowners and legislators should cooperate to boost similar projects in the state, the Argus Leader reports.

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## **Three-month extension for customer interest in Kinder Morgan pipeline project**

Potential customers now have until mid-December to propose deals to ship natural gas via Kinder Morgan's proposed \$4 billion pipeline from the Utica and Marcellus fields to the Gulf Coast, FuelFix reports.

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## **DOE trying to spread its research money effectively**

In an area where success may be critical to the fight against climate change, the Department of Energy is seeking to balance support for research in fundamental science with backing for applied research that has short-term objectives, Undersecretary for Science and Energy Lynn Orr told E&E.

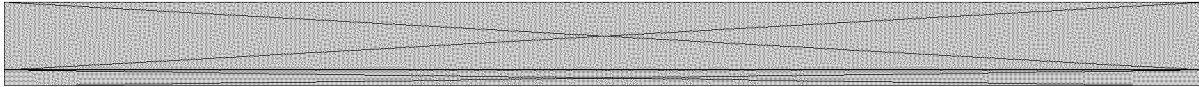
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## **Upcoming Events**

- Sep. 15, Washington: The Atlantic Council to hold a panel discussion on the role natural gas will play in Iran's economy as western sanctions are withdrawn as part of the P5+1 nuclear agreement. 12:00 pm , 1030 15th Street, NW.
- Sep. 15, New Orleans, Louisiana: The House Natural Resources Committee to hold an oversight hearing for federal energy policies and their impact on economic development in the Gulf of Mexico. Sens. David Vitter and Bill Cassidy, and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement Gulf of Mexico Regional Director Lars Herbst to testify. 10:00 am , 400 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Sep. 15, Washington: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to address the Growth Energy Advocacy Conference. CEO Tom Buis and Board of Directors Co-Chair Jeff Broin will also hold a press conference. 10:00 am , Hyatt Regency, 400 New Jersey Ave NW.
- Sep. 15, Washington: Combined Heat & Power to hold its annual conference, focused on resiliency and energy security. 9:00 am , National Press Club.
- Sep. 15, Washington: Sens. Ed Markey, D-Mass., Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., and John Hoeven, D-N.D., to speak at a National Journal event on congressional efforts to end the crude oil export ban and its potential impacts. 8:45 am , 50 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
- Sep. 16, Washington: The House Energy and Commerce to hold a full committee markup of a bill from Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, to lift the ban on crude oil exports and the North American Security and Infrastructure Act of 2015. 5:00 pm , 2123 Rayburn.
- Sep. 16, Washington: BHP Billiton CEO Andrew Mackenzie to speak at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce luncheon as part of the business group's CEO Leadership Series. 11:30 am , 1615 H Street NW.

- Sep. 16, Washington: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to hold an oversight hearing on the Environmental Protection Agency's Gold King Mine spill in Colorado and the agency's response. Administrator Gina McCarthy to testify. 10:00 am , 406 Dirksen.
- Sep. 16, Washington: Sens. Angus King, I-Maine, and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, to give remarks at a Center for Strategic and International Studies event on Arctic research and scientific developments. White House Director of Office of Science and Technology John Holdren also set to speak. 8:30 am , 1616 Rhode Island Avenue NW.



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